

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A retractable rule assembly comprising 1  
a housing assembly;  
5 a reel rotatably mounted in said housing assembly; 3  
an elongated blade formed of a ribbon of metal having one end  
connected to said reel constructed and arranged with respect to said housing 5  
assembly to extend from a position tangential to said reel outwardly through a  
spaced opening in said housing assembly;  
10 a coil spring formed of a ribbon of metal having a construction and 8  
arrangement between said housing assembly and said reel to rotate said reel in  
said housing assembly in a direction to wind up the elongated blade when 10  
extending outwardly of said housing assembly opening in a normal  
concavo-convex cross-sectional configuration onto said reel in an abutting volute 12  
15 coil formation in a flattened cross-sectional configuration; and  
a blade holding assembly constructed and arranged to be 14  
manually actuated to hold the blade in any position of extension outwardly of  
said housing assembly opening and to release the blade from any position in 16  
which it is held;  
20 said elongated blade having a width in said flattened configuration 18  
thereof having a dimension within the range of 1.10" - 1.5", and a height in the  
concavo-convex configuration thereof having a dimension within the range of 20  
0.25"-0.40".